



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection & Permanency	Effective Date:
Volume:	IV	Out of Home Placement	
Chapter:	B	Resource Care	12-19-2016
Subchapter:	1	Recruitment of Resource Homes	
Issuance:	325	Siblings In Best Settings (SIBS)	

Purpose:

This issuance establishes policy and procedures for the recruitment, processing and maintenance of resource homes for sibling groups of four or more, known as Siblings In Best Settings (SIBS).

Authority:

The Department of Children and Families' "Sustainability and Exit" Plan
42 USC 671(a)(31)(A)

Policy:

A) Siblings In Best Settings (SIBS) Resource Homes

Siblings In Best Settings (SIBS) Resource Family Homes is a program for resource families willing and able to accommodate large sibling groups of four or more throughout the siblings' placement episode.

Each Local Resource Family Unit shall contain a repository of SIBS Resource Family Homes capable and ready to provide out-of-home care to sibling groups of four or more. The Area Resource Family Specialist (ARFS) is responsible for coordinating and monitoring SIBS Resource Family Homes in his or her catchment.

B) Recruitment of SIBS Resource Homes

SIBS Resource Homes must meet the Office of Licensing standards.

Recommendations for SIBS Resource Family Homes can come from the following:

- Resource Family Support Workers;
- Local Office Workers;
- Area Office staff; and
- Office of Licensing staff (OOL).

Recommendation from within the Division to support the development of a SIBS Resource Family Home is addressed in a memo via email to the following:

- Area Resource Family Specialist;
- Resource Family Supervisor;
- Resource Family Support Worker;
- OOL Supervisor;
- Office of Resource Families CPS; and
- SIBS Coordinator.

The memo recommendation includes, but is not limited to:

- The name and address of the prospective SIBS Resource Family Provider;
- County of residence;
- A brief description of the status of the home (e.g., licensed/pending licensing, children in placement, relative, etc.);
- Why is this Resource Family willing and able to care for 4 or more siblings?;
- Describe the physical aspects of the home and bedroom space. Is there sufficient space to support a sibling group of 4 or more children?;
- What supports does the Resource Family Parent(s) have to assist with the daily care of 4 or more siblings?;

- How will transportation needs be met?;
- Is this a kinship or non-kinship resource family home?; and,
- Is this children-specific placement?

In addition to the routine recruitment, methods used by CP&P Resource Family Recruiters, (See [CP&P-IV-B-1-200, Methods of Recruitment](#)), SIBS Resource Homes can be developed from:

- Existing resource family homes (with or without children in placement);
- Existing kinship homes (with or without children in placement);
- New applicants;
- Resource homes in the licensing process; or
- Resource homes processing under presumptive eligibility.

Additionally, an existing resource/kinship home that has part of a sibling group and has achieved permanency (whether through adoption/KLG or custody) and accepts additional siblings which equal a total of 4 or more siblings in the home can be considered a SIBS home. Special note: the increased SIBS rate can only be applied to the current children in placement.

C) Assessing Prospective SIBS Resource Home Providers

Each resource home provider is assessed for his or her unique ability to care for large sibling groups with emphasis on the following:

- Space of the resource home;
- Resource family parent's family and community support systems; and
- Method of transportation for a large sibling group.

Resource family homes who meet the criteria to be a SIBS Resource Family Home are approved for use by the ARFS.

An exception to the population limit waiver is required on homes with more than 4 children in placement, or more than six children in the home.

D) Coordinating and Monitoring of SIBS Resource Family Homes

The ARFS is responsible for overseeing the SIBS Resource Family Homes in his or her area.

The ARFS or his or her designee's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Processing the exception to over population waivers;
- Securing services for the SIBS Resource Family Homes;
- Updating the resource home type in NJSPIRIT;
- Ensuring the Exceptional Board Rate is applied;
- Processing the \$200 dollar monthly retainer fee for vacant SIBS Resource Family Homes;
- Assessing all SIBS Resource Family Homes receiving a monthly retainer fee for appropriateness of continuation of use or the retainer fee; and
- Exploring potential SIBS Resource Family Homes by reviewing current and presumptive eligibility resource homes with capacity of 4 or more.

The ARFS is not responsible for the direct case management of the SIBS Resource Family Homes. The day-to-day operation (e.g., Minimum Visitation Requirement (MVR's), annual re-inspection/reevaluation, Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU) Corrective Actions and Office of Licensing (OOL)) issues are the responsibility of the Local Office Resource Family Unit staff.

Procedures:

1) Recruitment of SIBS Resource Homes

The ARFS or SIBS Coordinator regularly attends local recruitment events to present the SIBS Program to prospective Resource Family Parents. The ARFS conduct follow-up phone calls with interested parties from recruitment events to further discuss the SIBS Program.

The AFRS or SIBS Coordinator contacts the Supervisors in the Local Resource Family Units and the Office of Licensing (OOL) to obtain the current status of resource families with a population of four or more. The ARFS regularly reviews

the files of licensed and pending resource family homes to determine appropriateness for conversion to a SIBS Resource Family Home.

Recommended resource family homes are contacted by the ARFS for discussion about the SIBS Program.

2) Responsibility of the Resource Family Unit

The assigned Resource Family Support Worker and his or her Supervisor assesses pertinent information related to the history of the Resource Family or the applicant to determine the family's ability to care for a large number of children.

If children are in placement, the assigned Worker completes a Safety Assessment using, CP&P [Form 22-24](#), New Jersey CP&P Caregiver Strengths and Needs Assessment

The Resource Family Supervisor completes a SIBS memo recommending the conversion of the home to a SIBS Resource Family Home and submits to the ARFS. The memo includes: an exception to the population limit waiver (if required), and whether or not children have been identified for placement into the home).

The memo outlines the areas listed in Policy letter C) Assessing Prospective SIBS Resource Home Providers.

3) Responsibility of the ARFS or SIBS Coordinator in Processing SIBS Homes with a Population of 4 or More

The ARFS contacts the recommended Resource Family Parent to explain the SIBS Program and verify his or her interest in the SIBS Program.

The ARFS reviews and approves the SIBS memo and exception to population limit waiver prepared by the Resource Family Supervisor recommending a Resource Family Home for conversion to a SIBS Resource Family Home. The memo is required whether children have been identified for the SIBS Resource Family or not.

The ARFS submits the memo and SIBS waiver approved by the Local Office Manager to the assigned OOL Supervisor requesting an exception to the population limit for a capacity of 5 or more siblings.

For presumptive eligibility homes, the exception to the population limit waiver is completed immediately and sent to the OOL assigned Supervisor for processing. **Do not** wait to send the exception to the population limit waiver with the completed home study.

4) Responsibility of the Office of Licensing for Licensing SIBS Homes with a Population of 5 or More

The OOL Supervisor reviews the SIBS memo recommending the resource home conversion or opening as a SIBS Resource Family Home.

The OOL Supervisor reviews the Home Study Assessment Packet and identifies any unresolved issues or violations. All unresolved issues or violations must be resolved before the home can be processed as a SIBS Resource Family Home.

The assigned OOL Supervisor reviews the Safety Assessment, CP&P [Form 22-24](#), New Jersey CP&P Caregiver Strengths and Needs Assessment (used when children are in placement) and SIBS memo.

The assigned OOL Supervisor determines if the household meets licensing standards for a capacity of four or more children and reviews and approves the exception to population limitation waiver (if 5 or more children) and forwards the waiver and the license to the ARFS, Resource Family Supervisor, and SIBS Coordinator (if different from the ARFS). The OOL Supervisor approves the waiver for sibling groups of 5 or more.

The OOL Supervisor changes or issues the Resource Family Home license to reflect the home as a SIBS Resource Family Home.

5) Facilitating a SIBS Placement

The ARFS or his or her designee is responsible for securing placements in SIBS Resource Family Homes. Request for the placement of four or more siblings in a SIBS Resource Family Home is initiated by the assigned Worker using the NJSPIRIT Placement Request Window.

The Local Office Resource Family Facilitator contacts the ARFS for assistance in accessing available SIBS homes within and outside of the designated county.

When attempting to secure placement in a SIBS Home, the Resource Family Facilitator documents all phone contact with SIBS Resource Family Parents and the outcome of the call using CP&P [Form 26-52](#), Contact Sheet in the Contact Activity Window of NJSPIRIT.

For additional assistance in securing placement into a licensed SIBS Resource Home, contact the Area Office ARFS or his or her designee.

An updated list of statewide SIBS homes is posted monthly on *SharePoint*.

3) Technical Tasks Regarding Placement into a SIBS Home

The ARFS or SIBS Coordinator updates the resource home type in NJSPIRIT by selecting the SIBS Resource Family Home in the dropdown box on type of home.

If children are not already in placement ensure the monthly retainer of \$200 dollars is processed through the Office of Accounting by completing a Special Approval Request (SAR) and Payment Voucher.

The SAR and Payment Voucher are processed for the month previous (similar to how board payments are processed).

Assess all homes receiving a retainer fee on a monthly basis to determine appropriateness of continuation.

If children are in placement in the SIBS home, ensure the Exceptional Board Rate is applied as listed below:

Foster Care Base Rates + \$100.00:

AGE:	RATES:
G07c_SIBS_PRGM 0-5:	Rate \$863.00
G07c_SIBS_PROG 6-9:	Rate \$945.00
G07c_SIBS_PROG 10-12:	Rate \$972.00
G07c_SIBS_PROG 13-18:	Rate \$1007.00

Use the correct Sub-service Component: G07c-SIBS Program for the appropriate age. If entered correctly, the payment line will show the appropriate rate with the \$100.00 increase;

Send placement for approval; and

Create a new rate assessment- Level A.

For Retroactive Payments email the ARFS or SIBS Coordinator for assistance in processing.

4) Referral for Services

To support the sibling placement and maintain the SIBS Resource Family Home, the Division makes every effort to provide contracted agencies or area-based services to link to the SIBS Resource Family Home.

The Responsibility of the ARFS or SIBS Coordinator:
Contact identified contracted agencies or relevant services in the area and coordinate supportive service delivery;

Middlesex, Union and Essex Counties ARFS contact the SIBS coordinator to coordinate services through Catholic Charities Sibling Experience Program;

Contact Foster and Adoptive Families (FAFS) regarding:

Referral to Resource Family Advocate; and

Referral of SIBS Resource Family Parent for in-service training focusing on issues unique to siblings and sibling relationships.

Key Terms (Definitions):

Area Resource Family Specialist (ARFS) - A highly skilled Resource Family Worker, located in the Area Office, employed to oversee, coordinate, monitor and supervise special projects pertaining to the Local Office Resource Family Units in his or her catchment.

Siblings In Best Settings (SIBS) - A program within the Office of Resource Families located in the Area Offices, designed to recruit, support and maintain resource family homes for sibling groups of four or more.

Sibling In Best Setting Coordinator (SIBS Coordinator) - A liaison between Local Office Resource staff and the Area Resource Family Specialist (ARFS) overseeing the day-to-day operations of the SIBS Program.

Forms and Attachments:

CP&P [Form 22-24](#), New Jersey CP&P Caregiver Strengths and Needs Assessment

NJ SPIRIT Placement Request Window

CP&P [Form 26-52](#), Contact Sheet

Related Information:

[CP&P-IV-B-1-200, Methods of Recruitment](#)